

Black Moshannon



Pennsylvania State Parks Mission

The primary purpose of Pennsylvania State Parks is to provide opportunities for enjoying healthful outdoor recreation and serve as outdoor classrooms for environmental education. In meeting these purposes, the conservation of the natural, scenic, aesthetic, and historical values of parks should be given first consideration. Stewardship responsibilities should be carried out in a way that protects the natural outdoor experience for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

visitPAparks

2021



BLACK MOSHANNON STATE PARK

Black Moshannon State Park covers 3,394 acres of forests and wetlands and conserves unique, natural environments. More than 43,000 acres of Moshannon State Forest surround the park and help create a remote and wild setting that provides recreational opportunities in all seasons.

According to local lore, the Susquehannock peoples called this watershed “Moss-Hanne,” meaning “moose stream” in the Haudenosaunee (Iroquoian) language, thus the origin of the park’s name. Appropriately, the “black” in the park name describes the tea-colored waters. The 250-acre Black Moshannon Lake is fed by clear springs and small streams, which flow through bogs before entering the lake. As the clear water flows through sphagnum moss and other wetland plants, it becomes colored by plant tannins. In a sense, the bog vegetation acts like a giant teabag to color the water.

Directions

GPS DD: Lat. 40.9122 Long. -78.05690

From Northeast: Take I-80 west to Milesburg Exit 158, then Alt. US 220 south for 6 miles. Turn right onto PA 504 west for 12 miles to the park.

From Northwest: Take I-80 east to Kylertown Exit 133. Turn left onto PA 53 for 0.8 mile (through traffic light). At the park sign, turn right onto Winburne Road for 3.5 miles, then turn left onto Casanova Road then 5.5 miles to the park.

From Southeast: Take US 322 west to Exit 68 (Grays Woods/Waddle). On the ramp stay right toward Waddle, then continue 6 miles. Bear right onto the ramp for Alt. US 220 north and then travel for 1 mile. Cars and trucks without trailers can turn left onto Steele Hollow Road, then left onto Beaver Road. RVs and vehicles towing trailers should proceed an additional 4 miles, then turn left onto Beaver Road at the park sign

in village of Julian to take Beaver Road for 8 miles to the park.

From Southwest: From Philipsburg, follow US 322 east. Turn left onto PA 504 and travel 8 miles to the park.

From South: Take I-99 north to Exit 61 at Port Matilda. Turn right at end of ramp. In 1/2 mile, turn left at traffic light, then 4 miles on Alt. US 220 (Eagle Valley Road). Cars and trucks without trailers can turn left onto Steele Hollow Road, then left onto Beaver Road. RVs and vehicles towing trailers should proceed an additional 4 miles, then turn left at the park sign in village of Julian to take Beaver Road for 8 miles to the park.

Reservations

Make online reservations at www.dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks or call toll-free 888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757), 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Saturday.

MOSS-HANNE HISTORY

EARLY HISTORY: Human use of this area has always been reflected in the use of Black Moshannon’s water. The Susquehannock people hunted, traded, and fished here when the present lake was a string of beaver ponds. Travel over the Allegheny Front was difficult; game paths turned into foot paths and certain foot paths were improved for horses and oxen. Only the very best paths became wagon roads. By 1821, the Philadelphia-Erie Pike (now PA 504) opened and settlement began with the establishment of the Antes House, a tavern, near the present bridge. This substantial hotel hosted weary travelers, and sheep and cattle drovers making their way across the steep Allegheny Front.

TIMBER!: Towering white pines and hemlocks once covered the surrounding slopes and the dense foliage blocked out the sun, making it dark even on sunny days. Weathered stumps now mark where the Beaver Mill Lumber Company cut these trees about a century ago. Some beaver ponds disappeared when loggers constructed a splash dam near the site of the present dam. The water from the splash dam was used to flush logs downstream. Eventually the logs floated down the Susquehanna River to

mills in Williamsport. In one year, the Beaver Mill Lumber Company floated over 11 million feet of logs, the largest amount put in by any single logger in Pennsylvania. Some wood was processed at a shingle mill, located below the present beach. By 1879, timber was cut at the steam powered Star Mill, once located at the north end of Star Mill Trail. The mill boasted 20 saws, a planer, and a shingle mill. It was supported by 150 teams of horses and mules and a second village called Beaver Mills located near Shirks Run at the south end of the park. When Star Mill operated, the splash dam was changed again to a mill pond to store logs.

Before the turn of the 20th century, Beaver Mills and Antes featured a large general store, a wagon shop, a blacksmith shop, mills, stables, a hotel-tavern, a schoolhouse, and a 10-pin alley! The schoolhouse still stands near the food concession. The rugged people of the area helped meet the nation’s growing need for timber for mining, railroads, and construction. Some thought the timber supply would never end.

It did end, for a while. As the supply of timber decreased, lumber companies moved. The job

market collapsed. The denuded landscape fell prey to fires and erosion.

To restore the land, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania bought thousands of acres of burnt and desolate land. Pennsylvania set a path to reforestation through the establishment of the state forest system, one that now includes Moshannon State Forest.

CCC CAMP: To relieve unemployment during the Great Depression, President Franklin Roosevelt created the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1933. By May of that year, the Beaver Meadow CCC Camp (S-71-PA), located near the abandoned town of Beaver Mills, became one of the first to open. It put over 200 young men to work conserving timber, water, and soil. They built roads to aid forest fire fighting, planted trees to help reforest the land, and constructed a new dam to provide swimming, boating, and fishing. Visitors today can still enjoy facilities built by the CCC boys, including log cabins, the food concession, picnic pavilions, and some trails.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Spend the Day



BOATING: electric motors permitted

The 250-acre Black Moshannon Lake has reservable mooring spaces and four boat launch areas. Boat rentals are available in the summer season. Boating Area 1 is ADA accessible. The use of gas-powered motors is prohibited.

Motorboats must display a boat registration from any state. Non-powered boats must display one of the following: boat registration from any state; launch permit or mooring permit from Pennsylvania State Parks, available at most state park offices; launch use permit from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.

PICNICKING: Picnic tables and grills are provided throughout the park. Eight picnic pavilions, some with electricity, may be reserved for a fee, or when unreserved, may be used on a first-come, first-served basis at no charge. ADA accessible pavilions and tables are available.

MOUNTAIN BIKING: 4.3 miles

Sleepy Hollow and Star Mill trails offer convenient, short loops to bikers. Snowmobile Trail provides access to additional trails on

Moshannon State Forest land for mountain bikes. State forest roads (unpaved) are also open to biking. Ski Slope Trail provides a challenge to mountain bikers. Biking is prohibited on all other park trails.

FISHING: The 250-acre Black Moshannon Lake provides habitat for warmwater fish. Largemouth bass and pickerel are the primary target species, however there are bluegill, yellow perch, black crappie, and catfish in the lake as well. An ADA accessible fishing pier is on the western shore of the lake.

Downstream of the lake, Black Moshannon Creek contains trout. A Delayed Harvest – Artificial Lures Only area is designated on 1.3 miles of Black Moshannon Creek from the state park boundary to 0.3-mile downstream of the Huckleberry Road bridge. Trout anglers can enjoy their sport in several nearby streams, especially Six Mile Run.

Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission regulations and laws apply.

HUNTING AND FIREARMS: Over 3,000 acres are open to hunting, trapping, and the training of dogs during established seasons. Common game species are deer, wild turkey, bear, grouse, and squirrel. Adjacent state forest land is also open for public hunting.

Hunting woodchucks, also known as groundhogs, is prohibited. Dog training is only permitted from the day following Labor Day through March 31 in designated hunting areas. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Game Commission rules and regulations apply. Contact the park office for ADA accessible hunting information.

Use **extreme caution** with firearms at all times. Other visitors use the park during hunting seasons. Firearms and archery equipment used for hunting may be uncased and ready for use only in authorized hunting areas during hunting seasons. In areas not open to hunting or during non-hunting seasons, firearms and archery equipment shall be kept in the owner’s vehicle or enclosed trailer. Exceptions include: law enforcement officers and individuals with a valid *Pennsylvania License to Carry Firearms* are authorized to carry a firearm concealed on their person while they are within a state park.

SWIMMING: An ADA accessible sand beach is open from mid-May to mid-September, 8:00 AM to sunset. Swim at your own risk. Please read and follow posted rules. A beach wheelchair is available for use upon request. GPS DD: Lat. 40.91622 Long. -78.05909

DELUXE COTTAGES: Two deluxe cottages are available from the day before trout season in April until the end of deer season in mid-December. Deluxe cottages have minimal furnishings; kitchen stovetop, refrigerator, microwave oven, electric heat, lighting, and bunk beds. Access to water, restrooms with warm showers, and laundry facilities are centrally located in the cabin colony. Both cottages are ADA accessible. Deluxe cottage #22 is dog friendly.

ORGANIZED GROUP TENTING: Three campsites are available to non-profit groups of up to 20 people per site. Flush toilets are available, but no showers.

BACKPACKING: The Allegheny Front Trail is a 41.5-mile loop trail that encircles the park in Moshannon State Forest. There are several access points in the park. Backpack camping is only permitted in the Moshannon State Forest sections of the trail.

not monitored. For your safety, make sure ice is at least 4” thick for a single user and 7” thick for a small group. For iceboating, make sure ice is at least 6” thick. Always carry safety equipment.

ICEBOATING: Most of the lake is open for iceboating. A state park launch permit is required for iceboats.

ICE FISHING: Except for the ice-skating area, Black Moshannon Lake is open for ice fishing. Popular species caught through the ice are yellow perch, bluegill, northern pike, black crappie, and largemouth bass.

ICE SKATING: When conditions allow, an area of the lake by Boating Launch 1 is maintained for skating.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Discovering the Bog

In 1994, Pennsylvania gave additional protection to a 1,592-acre collection of unique and scenic bogs, marshes, swamps, and forests by designating it as the Black Moshannon Bog Natural Area. This special area is one of the best examples of a bog ecosystem in the Allegheny Plateau region. Its designation as a State Park Natural Area assures that its ecological values are preserved.



Pitcher plant

Bogs are freshwater wetlands with lots of sphagnum moss. Sphagnum moss absorbs water like a sponge. Once sphagnum moss dies, it decomposes so slowly that layers build, forming peat moss under the living sphagnum. Although many Pennsylvania bogs were formed as glaciers retreated, no glaciers ever

Wildlife Watching

Black Moshannon State Park is high atop the Allegheny Front and enjoys cool summer days and cold winters due to the unique geology of the area. Two features chill the park: high elevation and a slight basin shape that traps cooler, heavier air. Because of this, many plants and animals that are normally only observed farther north can be seen in the park.

The wildlife you observe depends greatly on the habitat types you visit and your observation techniques. Look for wildlife in the wealth of different woodland and wetland types, along shorelines, and in edges where one habitat borders another. Mornings and evenings, when many animals are active, are great times for viewing many species. Be quiet and leave pets at home. Walking slowly along trails, like Star Mill and Sleepy Hollow, is best, especially to see songbirds. Relish luck and the unexpected. Reading wildlife signs, such as tracks and droppings, can add to your enjoyment. Take part in park environmental education programs or use a wildlife watching guide to enhance your understanding and skill.



The bog

covered Black Moshannon which sits high on the Allegheny Plateau. Here, sloping bedrock directs water from the surrounding hills into the bog area. The shallow groundwater table makes the soil wetter than usual.

Sphagnum moss creates acidic and low nutrient conditions. When these factors combine with cool temperatures, only specialized plants can thrive. Seventeen species of orchids and all three carnivorous plants found in Pennsylvania grow in or near the bog. The bog also has a sea

The lake is a great place to see wildlife, especially the southern end. Explore by boat or walk Bog or Star Mill trails. Enjoy the flying stunts of barn and tree swallows from Lake Loop Trail, or look for mallard ducks, Canada geese, beavers, muskrats, great blue herons, or secretive wood ducks. Spring and fall are great times to observe migrating loons, mergansers, scaups, buffleheads, grebes, tundra swans, and snow geese. Rafts of fragrant water lily, watershield, and spatterdock plants on the lake shelter tadpoles, sunfishes, catfishes, perch, pickerels, and basses in the waters below.

The park is known for spectacular bogs, marshes, and swamps. Discover wetlands by walking the Bog and Moss-Hanne trails. There are leatherleaf, steplebushes, blueberries, and sedges. Look for carnivorous plants, such as pitcher plants and sundews, other unusual wildflowers, and colorful damselflies and dragonflies. Sharp-eyed visitors may encounter frogs, salamanders, northern water snakes, or black bears. Many birds make their summer homes only in wetland habitats making the park

of sedges and leatherleaf shrubs, fuzzy tufts of arctic cotton grasses, multi-colored viburnums, cranberries, and blueberries. Those looking for wildlife may see amphibians, beavers, and uncommon birds.

A great way to explore these natural areas is to hike the Star Mill Trail or Bog Trail. Those who like boating can investigate the wilder, southern end of the lake by canoe or kayak. The more adventurous can hike the Moss-Hanne Trail.



White-breasted nuthatch

a great place for birdwatching. The National Audubon Society designated the park as an Important Bird Area.

Forest visitors see chipmunks, songbirds, and bats in clearings at dusk. The more observant may see deer, raccoons, opossums, porcupines, flying squirrels, woodpeckers, turkeys, grouse, and hawks. Occasionally, visitors come upon foxes, weasels, bobcats, coyotes, and ravens. Creekside explorers on Shingle Mill Trail may see kingfishers, salamanders, crayfishes, and trout.

Spring brings out woodland wildflowers. Mountain laurels bloom in mid to late June; look along the Ski Slope trail. In late September to early October, exploding fall colors paint Black Moshannon in autumn’s glory.

Feeding Wildlife is prohibited. Feeding makes wild animals lose their natural fear of people and makes them more dependent on people. Therefore, potentially dangerous situations can arise.

PLEASE NOTE: Black bears are present at Black Moshannon and can cause injuries or damage to equipment. Canada geese create unpleasant and unsanitary conditions when they leave droppings in the same place each day. We ask your cooperation in managing the wildlife in the park. For safety, campers should store food in their trunk or camper, but not in a tent. Don’t feed wildlife. Keep the wild in wildlife.

Stay the Night

Reservations can be made up to 11 months in advance. An ADA accessible concession and camp store are open seasonally.



CAMPING: The 73 campsites each have a picnic table, fire ring, and lantern hook. Most sites have electrical hookups, and some full-hookup sites are available. Pets are permitted on designated sites. Some campsites are ADA accessible.

The campground features modern shower houses with flush toilets and coin-operated laundry machines. A sanitary dump station is available. The camping season begins the second Friday in April and ends after rifle deer season in mid-December. GPS DD: Lat. 40.91878 Long. -78.06863

Enjoy the Winter



Ice fishing

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING: Recommended trails are marked with the cross-country skier symbol on the map. Trails are not groomed.

SNOWMOBILING: Conditions permitting, snowmobile trails open the day after the last day of Pennsylvania’s regular or extended rifle deer season and close April 1. Registered snowmobiles may use Benner Run Road, Shirks Road, Snowmobile Trail, and designated trails in Moshannon State Forest. A small portion of the Sleepy Hollow Trail is open for access to the cabin area.

ICE SAFETY: Use **extreme caution** when venturing onto the ice. Check online or with the park office to determine ice conditions in the skating area. Other areas of the lake are



Black swallowtail butterfly

BLACK MOSHANNON STATE PARK

CENTRE COUNTY

- TRAIL INFORMATION**
- Hiking Trail
 - Multi-use Trail: Hiking, Biking, Snowmobiling
 - Allegheny Front Trail: Backpacking
 - Trail Mile Marker
 - Joint-use Road: Auto/Snowmobile
 - Cross-country Skiing Recommended
 - Horseback Riding
 - Snowmobiling
- Park Office
 - Blue Symbols Mean ADA Accessible
 - Public Phone
 - Modern Restrooms
 - Environmental Learning Center
 - Amphitheater
 - Food Concession and Camp Store
 - Picnicking
 - Picnic Pavilion
 - Scenic View
 - Showers/Restrooms
 - Camping
 - Organized Group Tenting
 - Modern Cabin
 - Rustic Cabin
 - Deluxe Cottage
 - Sanitary Dump Station
 - Swimming Beach
 - Playground
 - Fishing Pier
 - Boat Launch & Mooring
 - Boat Rental
 - Ice Skating
 - Sledding
 - Unpaved Road
 - Paved Road
 - Gate
 - Parking Paved
 - Parking Unpaved
 - Electric Vehicle Charging Station
 - State Park No Hunting
 - State Park Hunting
 - State Park Hunting Late Muzzleloader/Archery Only
 - Natural Area Boundary
 - Delayed Harvest Artificial Lures Only
 - Wetlands
- CONTOURS ARE ON 50 FT. INTERVALS

- GPS Coordinates**
Decimal Degree Lat. Long.
- Park Office
40.91220, -78.05688
 - Campground
40.91878, -78.06863
 - Cabin Area
40.91321, -78.06620
 - Beach
40.91622, -78.05909
 - Bog Trail
40.90140, -78.05775

HIKING TRAILS: 24 miles



The trails pass through the varied habitats of the park. Seneca, Indian, Bog, and Hay Road trails are connected, making them suitable for loop hikes. Tell us about your hike at: www.ExplorePAtrails.com

Allegheny Front Trail (AFT): 41.5 miles (3 miles in the park), most difficult hiking
This trail encircles the park, traversing 40 miles of the Allegheny Plateau, some rocky and rugged, on the way to five mountain trout streams and eleven vistas in Moshannon State Forest. AFT is ideal for backpacking or a day hike on any segment.

Blueberry Trail: 1-mile loop, easiest hiking
Get a taste of the Black Moshannon Bog Natural Area on this short loop. Parking is available at the Mid-State Airport. The trail is abundant with many berries which also attracts a variety of wildlife, including many bird species.

Bog Trail: 0.3 mile, 0.5 mile full loop, easiest hiking
Take the boardwalk to explore a wetland dominated by sphagnum moss and leatherleaf and accented by sedges, rushes, carnivorous plants, and lilies. Observe waterfowl and other wildlife along the trail. Wayside panels tell the surprising story of bogs and other park wetlands. Access for people with disabilities is at Boating Area 3. To make the trail a loop, walk Westside Road back to the trailhead. GPS DD: Lat. 40.9014 Long. -78.05775

Hay Road Trail: 1.1 miles, easiest hiking
Once used by farmers who harvested marsh grasses, this grassy old road eases through a mature mixed-oak forest with a black cherry understory.

Indian Trail: 1 mile, more difficult hiking
This trail leads travelers through changing scenery of open oak woods, pines, clearings, and an unusual grove of hawthorns.

Lake Loop Trail: 0.7 mile, easiest hiking
This flat loop connects two bridges for an easy walk along the lake's northern shoreline. The trail offers a visit to the beach and the dam. Pets are prohibited on the beach. Please walk pets to the back of the beach house.

Moss-Hanne Trail: 7.7 miles, more difficult hiking
On its way through the Black Moshannon Bog Natural Area, this trail travels through pine plantations, hemlock bottomlands, wetland edges, hardwood forests, grassy openings, blueberry patches, and beaver ponds. Waterproof footwear is recommended since some sections are often wet. Two boardwalk sections allow exploration of a big marsh and an alder swamp. The best blueberries are found near this trail from mid-June to mid-August.

Seneca Trail: 0.8 mile, easiest hiking
This trail weaves through a typical second growth forest of oak and cherry, which shades stumps of pine that were logged out over a century ago.

Shingle Mill Trail: 3.67 miles (2 miles within the park), more difficult hiking
This path ventures from the parking area near the dam and follows beautiful Black Moshannon Creek. The trail continues north of the Huckleberry Road bridge and connects to Allegheny Front Trail.

Ski Slope Trail: 3.1 miles, most difficult hiking
Begin at the beach parking lot for a trek up the mountain. Enjoy the views from the highest point in the park, including an old ski slope. At the PA 504 crossing, try to decipher the old Philadelphia-Erie Turnpike mile marker.

Sleepy Hollow Trail: 1.2-mile loop, more difficult hiking
Explore a hemlock-birch forest and woodlands of cherry and oak. This trail is recommended for spring wildflowers. Look for evidence of a 1984 selective timber cut which removed trees killed by years of gypsy moth defoliation. Young trees provide good food and cover for turkeys, deer, and songbirds. The trail starts near Pavilion 1.

Snowmobile Trail: 1.1 miles, easiest hiking
This trail connects to gravel roads and trails open to snowmobiles, horses, and mountain bikes on surrounding state forest land. This grassy old road provides a trip through an oak forest with an open understory. The trail begins at the Beach Parking lot, which is plowed in winter.

Star Mill Trail: 2.1-mile loop, easiest hiking
With fine views of the lake and opportunities to see wildlife, this trail travels through pines, a climax forest of beech and hemlock, and an uncommon stand of balsam fir.

Tent Hill Trail: 0.2 mile, more difficult hiking
Begin near Campsite 22. This trail drops down to the lake shoreline and connects the campground with Lake Loop Trail.



INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS

Black Moshannon State Park
4216 Beaver Road
Philipsburg, PA 16866-9519
814-342-5960
BlackMoshannonSP@pa.gov
An Equal Opportunity Employer
www.dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks
@BlackMoshannonStatePark

Make online reservations at
www.visitPAparks.com or call toll-free
888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757), 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Saturday.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station
A 2-plug, electric-vehicle charging station is available for public use in the boat rental parking lot along Route 504. Please move to another parking space once your vehicle has been charged.

Access for People with Disabilities

This symbol indicates facilities and activities that are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible for people with disabilities. This publication text is available in alternative formats.

If you need an accommodation to participate in park activities due to a disability, please contact the park you plan to visit.

In an Emergency

Call 911 and contact a park employee. Directions to the nearest hospital are posted on bulletin boards and at the park office.

From the park office, follow Beaver Road 8 miles. Turn right onto Alt. US 220 south, then right onto PA 322 east to Exit 73 to Mount Nittany Medical Center.

NEAREST HOSPITAL
Mount Nittany Medical Center
1800 East Park Avenue
State College, PA 16803
814-231-7000

Protect and Preserve our Parks

Please make your visit safe and enjoyable. Obey all posted rules and regulations and respect fellow visitors and the resources of the park.

- Be prepared and bring the proper equipment. Natural areas may possess hazards. Your personal safety and that of your family are your responsibility.

- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Please camp only in designated areas and try to minimize your impact on the campsite.

- Firewood Advisory: Firewood may contain non-native insects and plant diseases. Bringing firewood into the park from other areas may accidentally spread pest insects and diseases that threaten park resources and the health of our forests. Campers should use local firewood. Do not take wood home and do not leave firewood. Burn it!

Nearby Attractions

Information on nearby attractions is available from the Happy Valley Adventure Bureau, 800-358-5466. <https://www.visitpenstate.org/>

